

## REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **17 August 2006**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-24. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, and 17-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Meffert et al. (USPub 2002/0059144, hereinafter “Meffert”) in view of Liu (USPub 2002/0143710, hereinafter “Liu”).

### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 8 and 15 were rejected as being unpatentable over Meffert in view of Liu.

Applicant respectfully points out that **the present invention is directed to enable a network of database systems to provably track a message**. When client 120 sends a message to client 106, the message may pass through queues 116 and 118 in database systems 112 and 114, respectively (see FIG. 1). Each database system along the route persistently stores a signed digest that proves that the next database system in the route requested to receive the message (see [0027]). In this manner, the present invention enables the network of database systems to provably track the message as it travels from the message creator to the final recipient (see [0027]).

In contrast, the combined invention of **Meffert and Liu does not teach provably tracking a message in a network of database systems**. Specifically, Liu teaches non-repudiation for the end users, i.e., the message creator and the final recipient (see Liu, [0034], [0045]-[0047]). However, Liu does not teach persistently storing signed message digests at each intermediate node in the route. Meffert, on the other hand, simply teaches PKI-based encryption, and hence also does not teach provably tracking a message (see Meffert, Abstract). Hence, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is not obvious in view of Meffert and Liu.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully points out that provably tracking a message is important. For example, if an intermediate database system denies receiving a message, it is critical to enable the network of database systems to prove that the intermediate database system requested to receive the message.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15 to clarify that:

- the present invention is directed towards enabling a network of database systems to provably track a message which is created by the origin system, wherein the message passes through a first database system and a second database system which are different from the origin system and the recipient system; and
- the first database system sends a message digest to the second database system;
- the second database system signs the message digest and returns it to the first database system; and
- the first database system persistently stores the signed digest, which enables the first database system to prove that the second database system requested to receive the message, thereby enabling the network of databases to provably track the message.


These amendments find support in paragraphs [0008]-[0011] and [0027]. Applicant has also amended dependent claims 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, and 21 to correct antecedent basis. Further, Applicant has canceled claims 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 20, and 22-24 without prejudice.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 8 and 15 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 5 and 7, which depend from claim 1, claims 12 and 14, which depend from claim 8, and claims 19 and 21, which depend from claim 15, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

**CONCLUSION**

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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